

PEACE FREEDOM



FALL/WINTER 2015 VOL 75, NO. 2

MAGAZINE OF THE US SECTION OF THE
WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE & FREEDOM



**SOLIDARITY
PEACE
HUMAN RIGHTS
JUSTICE
DEMOCRACY
WILPF**

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The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) has been working since 1915 to unite women worldwide who oppose oppression and exploitation. WILPF stands for equality of all people in a world free of racism, sexism, and homophobia; the building of a constructive peace through world disarmament; and the changing of government priorities to meet human needs.

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Peace & Freedom is published by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), US Section.

Submissions welcome; please query first. Contact the editor at editor@wilpfus.org

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The Power of Solidarity Made Manifest

by Mary Hanson Harrison

Walking along the narrow brick sidewalks of Amsterdam, dodging the onslaught of bicycles that whizzed by too close for comfort, I thought of that gravel, dust-filled lane I walked down when I was a little girl in Iowa. Meandering down it, I daydreamed of the “outside” world and today I was there, celebrating the centennial of a women’s peace movement determined to keep our vision and mission vibrant and working around the globe. A few days later, I journeyed to The Hague for Congress 2015 and the Conference, where there were fewer bicycles and smoother sidewalks. What did I expect? What did I hope for?

All of our 33 WILPF Sections were represented, which included three new Sections: Cameroon, Ghana and Israel and now two new groups, Nicaragua and Uganda. WILPF US can be proud of the role we played in getting women to The Hague. The WILPF US Board approved \$25,000 to go to WILPF International to pay for the travel expenses of those women who could not have otherwise attended. It was a blessing to meet these women. Thank all of you for giving our delegation, and particularly myself, a chance to share these formative experiences with each other and our WILPF Sisters.

Speaking of Sisters, I invited WILPF Section Presidents to come for a Sunday brunch at my place before the Conference started. Our primary purpose was to take this unique opportunity of meeting face-to-face to transcend our borders while keeping our individual perspectives; all leading to shared aspirations. Gathered there were the leaders from Lebanon, Ghana, Colombia, Spain, Costa Rica, Pakistan, Cameroon, Philippines, Albania, US, and Nepal. Just the previous day Nepal sustained a deadly earthquake. Both our Nepal WILPF leaders, Neelam KC and Nirmala Sitoula, were there with us. As I write this, the earth shaking consequences are still rumbling throughout Nepal and throughout its displacement camps.

Today we are dealing with unprecedented displacement of peoples not only from environmental catastrophes but conflicts/war as well. According to Antonio Guterres, UN High Commissioner on Refugees, 59.5 million people were displaced by conflict, a 60 percent increase over a decade. In his article, “As Refugee Tide Mounts, No One in Control,” in *The World Post*, Guterres writes of hope



Section presidents meet at The Hague before the conference. L to R: Adilia Caravaca, former International President, Costa Rica; Mary Hanson Harrison, US; Carmen Magallón, Spain; Nouha Ghosn, Lebanon; Ayo Ayoola-Amale, Ghana; Katherine Ronderos, Colombia; Sameena Nazir, Pakistan; and Rosario Padilla, Philippines. Not pictured: Sylvie Jacqueline Ndongmo, Cameroon; Tatiana Kurtigi, Albanian IB member; and Neelam KC and Nirmala Sitoula, Nepal. Photo: Patricia Schroeder

of a “common solidarity” within civil society. Although he alludes to the root causes, what he dare not say is that this diaspora is emblematic of the capitalist exploitation of humanity and our environment.

Solidarity is not solid, not any particular color, not parceled out in tiny care packages or carved out of stone. In fact, it is ephemeral, but the bonds are sinewy. The sisterhood we experienced that morning was what I realized I had come searching for. Even though we didn’t discuss the heavy and often heartbreaking issues bearing down on each of our countries, we began to build a world of MANIFESTO 2015, from the global to a small room in The Netherlands and out again. As feminist theorist Chandra Talpada Mohanty articulates, “feminist visions of social transformation” start with “the everyday practices [and] are as important as larger organized political movements.”

Together, we now have a slight chance to create a more humane world through action and language, to articulate and enact a new *humane-ism* as the guiding compass for building a truly democratic world and, as Jane Addams urged us, to create a new moral force in the world. This force is made manifest through our relationships with one another. The responsibility to enact and sustain it is held individually and collectively in our hands; making manifest, (literally *struck by the hand*), the solutions as well as the problems we have in common. And therein lies the power...and the hope!

Yours in solidarity,

Mary Hanson Harrison
President, WILPF US Section

Meet our Managing Director

Lamia Sadek

While there are many complex and intricate leadership styles, I find critical and feminist theories of leadership to be of special relevance to WILPF.

Nicole Scott, chair of the personnel committee, notes that out of the more than 40 applicants who applied to the position for managing director of WILPF US, Lamia Sadek's international work, cross sector collaboration and nonprofit and private sector experience made her stand out. President Mary Hanson Harrison is looking forward to the application of the new managing director's knowledge of women's organizing and grassroots activism. "Mia brings us a complement of technical and financial expertise along with an in-depth understanding of women's leadership from the grassroots perspective, all of which is unique and much needed," says Harrison.

Mia was brought up in Cary, North Carolina. She studied business management and information technology as an undergraduate, then obtained a masters in training and development from North Carolina State University. She is finishing up a PhD in global leadership from Indiana Institute of Technology.

Mia started her career in business development and finance, but after working as a regional finance manager for a large for-profit corporation, decided to pursue her true passion and work in the non-profit sector.

She has worked in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, United Arab Emirates (UAE), the Sudanese border, Australia, Gaza, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the United Kingdom (UK). Most recently, Mia served as country director with Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) based in Birmingham, UK, where she oversaw operations in five countries, 300 staff members, 12 thematic programs and a budget of \$27,000,000 annually. Previously, Mia worked with Plan International as the country economic empowerment director, where she designed economic empowerment programs, with a gender equity cross-cutting theme, for the most marginalized groups residing in informal settlements (slum areas) in North Africa. Prior to that, she worked with the Education for Employment Foundation as programs manager where she helped design capacity building programs for under-privileged youths with the help of the business sector. In 2010, Mia was among an international humanitarian delegation to Gaza.



Her work over the years allowed her to develop technical and donor partnerships with many organizations, including UN Women, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the Save the Children Fund, the Population Council, Africa & Middle East Refugee Assistance (AMERA), and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Mia feels very fortunate to have the opportunity to be involved in the work which is her passion, working with women and the most marginalised groups. She designed and upgraded the "Youth Economic Empowerment" model, currently being implemented throughout North and Eastern Africa, which targets these groups and empowers them economically through access to capacity building and employment opportunities. Additionally, she participated in the design of a gender inclusive curriculum and provided training to facilitators on gender inclusive/sensitive instruction and mentorship. Over the past few years, she has dedicated special focus to working with refugee grassroot groups as well as single mothers facing social stigma and economic challenges.

Mia's doctoral dissertation investigates the informal leadership styles emerging organically among refugee women. She notes, "While there are many complex and intricate leadership styles, I find critical and feminist theories of leadership to be of special relevance to WILPF." In addition to her dissertation, Mia has two books forthcoming in 2016. *Chronicles of a Revolution* covers the 18 days of the Egyptian revolution which she witnessed, and the other, *Confessions of an Arab Feminist: An Arab, Muslim Woman's Journey in Feminism and Equal Rights*, concerns the social constructs of feminism and spirituality.

In her new position as managing director of WILPF US, Mia looks forward to enhancing WILPF's infrastructure and financial sustainability and helping to bring a more secure future for WILPF's vision and mission.

WILPF Issue Committees

Giving Activists Wings!

WILPF women have been called “dangerous” for almost a century for advocating for peace, human rights, democracy, protection of the earth, and freedom from corporate rule.

WILPF works to achieve world disarmament, full rights for women, racial and economic

justice, an end to all forms of violence, and to establish those political, social, and psychological conditions which can assure peace, freedom, and justice for all. As a multi-issue, grassroots activist membership organization, WILPF offers many opportunities for action, education and involvement. In addition to branch activities, members can become involved in issue committees which deal with peace and justice concerns in specific areas and welcome the involvement of members from all over the country. We invited the chairs of the issue committees to introduce their work, so in the following pages you'll find details of the six current national issue committees, which include the following:

- Advancing Human Rights
- Corporations v Democracy
- Cuba and the Bolivarian Alliance
- Disarm/End Wars
- Earth Democracy
- Middle East

Issue committee involvement is open to ALL and we NEED members to engage. We have a place for YOU!

Photo: Terri Berthiaume Hawthorne.
Buttons designed by Liz Dodson and Luella Greene (MN Metro WILPF).



Advancing Human Rights

Advancing Human Rights (AHR) works to ensure that the US is fully compliant with international human rights law in its domestic and international policy and operations. To that end, we work with our states and local communities to advance the understanding and application of international human rights treaties, including the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Convention Against Torture, to which the US is a party, and for the ratification of those treaties which have not yet been adopted by the US, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Covenant on Economic, Cultural and Social Rights. This committee also works to promote understanding and US compliance with the United Nations Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security: 1325, 1820, 1888, 1889 and 1960.

The AHR committee has several dozen WILPF US members on our email listserv, and most members are busy locally on lots of different issues and activities. We have members who are academics whose primary focus is on human rights, we have human rights practitioners, we have students who are studying human rights and we have members whose remunerative work supports them so that they can participate in grassroots activism for the greater good of the commons. We also know that we have members in branches and at-large who are doing human rights work but who are not active in the AHR committee and want to welcome everyone to our group.

WILPF Issue Committees (continued)



"The Buyers," part of a series depicting how male demand is at the root of the abuse of women trafficked and prostituted, by Myrna Balk (WILPF Boston), myrnabalk.com.

We know there is a lot of grassroots activism happening that we can learn about from those of you involved and would like to branch out and expand our horizons with you! Please let's share our information, ideas, experiences and expand our activism!

We have an active subcommittee on anti-human trafficking, chaired by Jan Kubiak of the Cape Cod (Mass.) Branch. Many of our AHR members are working on anti-human trafficking, and we will be involved with efforts again in 2016 around the NFL (football) Super Bowl, being held in California's Silicon Valley (in the San Francisco Bay Area), at Levi Stadium. The San Jose Branch is involved in the local group working with the NFL on awareness education, and others of us on the committee who are working on human trafficking offered information on their work, as well.

Our new program chair, Maureen Eke (at-large from central Michigan), is the organizer of a biennial international conference that is being held at her institution over the last weekend in October 2015 involving human rights in the arts, film and literature with a focus on human trafficking. She has invited several of our members who are working on this issue to consider becoming involved in the conference, perhaps with a panel, and this possibility was enthusiastically responded to by AHR participants.

We have members across the country (Portland, Oregon, and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to name two) working on the national "Cities for CEDAW" project for 2015, which is attempting to reach as many local government entities as possible to sign on to the CEDAW conventions – some of you are active in AHR and others are not and we'd love to have everyone involved in this project share your information with us.

We have an active effort engaged in the ongoing joint working group between Earth Democracy and AHR

and others in the Section to take on this issue: Water is a Human Right for All, which began at our Triennial Congress in Detroit in summer of 2014. Contact Rose Daitzman, rosedaitzman@wi.rr.com, if you would like to work on this or if you know of anyone in the Section who might like to learn more and meet other WILPF members working together on this. Although we have been working on water issues as a Section for many years, this joint effort and tie-in to water as a human right is a new formal focus for us in AHR.

WILPF members who are interested in any of these issues, or the issues under the Advancing Human Rights umbrella in general, are always invited to join us, or at least come to a meeting (held by teleconference) and share information with us. Contact either of the AHR co-chairs, Barbara Nielsen (bln.sf.ca@gmail.com) or Rose Daitzman (rosedaitzman@wi.rr.com), or Jan Kubiak (jankubiak@yahoo.com), our other leadership team member. We aim to meet monthly and are establishing a new meeting schedule. Please contact us to get on our mailing list so that we can include you in planning a meeting schedule! Hope to hear you on a call!

Corporations v Democracy: Taking On The Big Guys

In the early 90s, WILPF's **Corporations v Democracy Issue Committee (CvD)** took the lead in educating the country about Corporate Personhood and the threats it poses to our democracy, our environment, our economy, our workers' rights, human rights and our "common wealth."

Challenges

How best to respond to the daily assaults of corporate abuse of power that literally threaten everything we cherish? From military contractors to fossil fuel and energy corporations, horrific trade agreements, Big Ag and Big Banks... **Corporate Greed creates the conditions for conflict, austerity and war.**

Starting in 2009, we put a great deal of effort into supporting the Move To Amend (MTA) movement towards a Corporate Personhood Constitutional Amendment. We served on the steering committee in those early days, and our committee promoted that work so successfully around the country that many of our WILPF branches took up the issue, starting local MTA affiliates and supporting

them with funds and volunteers. *That has left our CvD Issue Committee at a disadvantage with fewer and fewer people joining our monthly calls, just when our activism is most needed.*

If you care about corporate abuse of power, we could use your ideas and energy on our monthly organizing conference calls. **Any WILPF member is free to join us.** Your ideas and activism will be heard and supported! **We meet the second Thursday evening of every month, 5pm Pacific, 6pm Mountain, 7pm Central, 8pm Eastern. Contact Marybeth Gardam (mbgardam@gmail.com or 863-651-4888) for call-in number and access code!**

Bring us your passion for justice and democracy!

There is still so much to do, so many fronts on which corporate power pushes democracy's envelope: Wall Street profiteers, the trade agreements that are wrecking our economy and our environment, food security or lack of it, GMO labeling, voter rights, election corruption and gerrymandering, water privatization, fracking and the nuclear power chain. So many issues revolve around corporate power and the dangers of unbridled, disaster capitalism.

Current Work: Impressive Tools for YOU!

Today CvD is most aggressively involved in the **food safety** aspect of toxic herbicides and GMOs. The World Health Organization recently identified glyphosate as a "probable carcinogen," yet it is sprayed ubiquitously on our food crops. Our collaborative project with Earth Democracy Issue Committee, **The Human Right To Health & Safe Food**, won unanimous approval at the 2014 Congress in Detroit. We're targeting **Monsanto** and the companies that distribute and promote toxic herbicides and GMOs and those that oppose labeling for organics and country of origin.

We created **excellent tools** for branches and at-large members to use to wake up their communities to this significant health threat, including the following:

- An attractive **infographic card** details all the issues and offers advice for What YOU Can Do. It's available for distributing at farmer's markets, health expos, food coops, and to environmental collaborating groups in your area;
- There are instructions and sample letters for a **letter writing campaign**;

- A **community survey** with "how to" instructions was created;
- An excellent **list of articles and studies** to back up our position on restricting the use and distribution of Roundup and other glyphosate herbicides; and
- There are even **test kits** you can order to test your community's water, the urine of residents and the breast milk of local nursing mothers for glyphosate.

All of these tools and many more are available at our **website**, humanrighttohealthcampaignswilpf.wordpress.com/.

Your passion could help define the next big project for CvD! Bring the issues YOU care most about to our monthly calls, and propose new projects, new goals, new strategies. We'll work together with you to amplify your local efforts and strengthen your projects. And we can help you get mini-grants!

Defeating organized MONEY takes organized people. Join us! We're ready to take on the big guys through education and activism. To become involved, contact CvD chair, Marybeth Gardam, mbgardam@gmail.com.

Cuba and the Bolivarian Alliance

Cuba and the Bolivarian Alliance Committee works to normalize relations between the US government and the countries comprising the Bolivarian Alliance. We have particular focus on Cuba because of the US blockade imposed against Cuba in 1960, and we take a cautious optimism now that the travel ban has been lifted and relations may begin to normalize between the US and Cuba. We are especially interested in informing WILPF members and allies on the advancement of women's rights under the Cuban Revolution and educating about Cuba's contribution to healthcare internationally. One project which demonstrates this is our support of the medical education of a young woman, Xochitl Garcia.

Xochitl Garcia's career choice was influenced by her African American software engineer father, a veteran community activist from the city of Detroit, Michigan. Her father's dedication as a single parent led Xochitl to care for him until November 2004 when he passed away from an aggressive form of lung cancer diagnosed three

WILPF Issue Committees (continued)

months earlier. Although Xochitl's father was one of a few black software engineers, he was unemployed for a couple of years and unable to access quality health care in a timely period even though he was a military veteran.

Her dream of becoming a doctor was made possible in 2008 when Xochitl was accepted to the Escuela Latino Americano de Medicina (ELAM) or the School of Latin American Medicine in Cuba. ELAM demonstrates Cuba's dedication to creating a health care infrastructure to serve future generations in impoverished nations. Initially a response to the needs created by hurricanes in the late 1990s that devastated Nicaragua, Honduras, Dominican Republic and Haiti, ELAM has since graduated almost 25,000 physicians from 80 different countries. Most of ELAM's students come from low-income families in medically underserved areas. They graduate debt-free and Cuba's only request is that they serve in the public sector to provide health care to those in need.

For more information on the Latin American School of Medicine, go to medicc.org and ifconews.org/medical-school. Cindy Domingo is the chair of WILPF's Cuba and Bolivarian Alliance issue committee. To become involved, contact her at cindydomingo@gmail.com.

Disarm/End Wars

Ellen Thomas and Carol Urner, as co-facilitators of the national Disarm/End Wars issue committee, welcome branch or at-large members to join the Disarm/End Wars listserv. As of August 2015 this included approximately 60 members. About 40 of these have participated actively in one or more of our national or international projects in the past year and seven are serving on our current leadership team.

The committee encourages members to work on those issues about which they are most passionate. Currently most are involved in some aspect of nuclear weapons abolition or on banning militarized drones. Those in branches, especially, are also often very active on the local level. The committee, however, also works in coalition with other organizations that help WILPFers expand participation to the national and global levels. Our End

Wars work includes participation in World Beyond War.

Most important is WILPF's Reaching Critical Will (RCW) which concentrates on the United Nations (UN) work in disarmament. The current committee has developed alongside RCW over the past seventeen years. We began under the guidance of Felicity Hill and Susi Snyder, followed by other brilliant young women (often, like Susi, still in their early twenties). RCW opens for all WILPFers amazing opportunities to enter into the UN's evolving global process of achieving *general and complete disarmament and ending the scourge of war*.

The US committee started as DISARM! Dismantle the War Economy and exposed and sought to close down or convert profiteering military corporations. RCW provided a large range of resources on what they called the Dirty Dozen. Most of these corporations were US based, and the DISARM team adapted the materials for branches in WILPF US to use. We would happily welcome members who want to renew that work.

Currently, some of our major work is on abolishing nuclear weapons and includes coalition opportunities. We are vigorously promoting HR 176 introduced in the House by Eleanor Holmes Norton. We see it as the best version yet. It is the only bill calling for US leadership in global nuclear weapons abolition, and it includes nuclear power elimination as well. Representative Norton relies on WILPF and our friends to bring the bill to Congress members. We hope to stimulate dialogue on abolition, which is now missing from the major media and from primary election debates. We've started with the Progressive Caucus and committee members who come from 22 different branches. We are expanding outward from there. Several members are cooperating with RCW to support the vast majority of UN members who seek a comprehensive ban on nuclear weapons now.

Members continue important coalition work: pursuing a Nuclear Free Zone in the Middle East, supporting the Marshall Islands suit against the nine nuclear powers, and continuing vigils and non-violent direct action to shut down Vandenberg AFB, vital link in controversial US nuclear weapons modernization.

Some members have also been active in trying to cut

the nuclear chain. Uranium mining, nuclear power, and 70 years of nuclear waste with nowhere to go are already killing their neighbors and other species where they live. Members are doing wonderful and exciting work, and we'll happily send more information. Our coalition contacts give us opportunities to lobby with nuclear experts and to participate actively in UN sessions.

Members are also cooperating with Code Pink and Keep Space for Peace in order to service our branches that have projects demilitarizing drones.

And remember we want to support your other projects as well. Who is ready to work on gun control and demilitarizing our local police? To become involved with Disarm/End Wars, please contact Carol Umer, carol.disarm@gmail.com, or Ellen Thomas, et@prop1.org.

Earth Democracy

Earth Democracy was created at the 2011 Congress in Chapel Hill when members voted to expand the *Save the Water* campaign that, along with local, national and international organizations, had focused mainly on bottled water and water privatization. By 2011, members and branches wanted to work on a broader range of environmental issues that call for attention.

Then, the new coordinating team needed to resolve: How to name this new group? Did we want or need an over-arching policy framework? Should we group issues together and highlight a specific policy direction for that issue? And finally, how could the way members and branches worked on individual issues, such as coal top mining, water privatization, fracking, or corporate agriculture and food, contribute to system change thereby progressing toward peace and freedom from the local to the global community? As Ronnie Dugger, Alliance for Democracy founder, wrote in 1996: "The issue is not issues; the issue is the system."

To start with, we chose the name **Earth Democracy**, title of Vandana Shiva's book, because we wanted to embrace her call for a new movement that "provides an alternative worldview in which humans are embedded in the Earth Family." She calls us to be connected to each



Earth Democracy's "Communities and Nature" workshop and study guide are supported by WILPF mini-grants.

other through love and compassion (not hatred and violence), to share ecological responsibility and to work for economic justice that replaces "greed, consumerism and competition as objectives of human life." Next, we grouped issues into four committees:

- Human Right to Water and Health
- Rights of Nature/Future Generations Guardianship
- Food Democracy/Local Economy
- Global Warming/Sustainable Energy

We settled on titles that would highlight both the content and the specific principle and policy direction that could lead toward system change, such as human rights, the rights of nature, food sovereignty and local food systems versus corporate industrial agriculture, and real "green" sustainable energy.

While Vandana Shiva and indigenous people worldwide are calling for much the same kind of movement, let's not forget that in 1967, Martin Luther King, Jr., in his most revolutionary speech, "Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence," which marked his move from civil rights to a critique of capitalism, made a similar appeal the year before he was killed. He called for a "revolution of values," a shift from a "thing-oriented society" to a "person-oriented" society and eloquently described his vision of "a worldwide fellowship that lifts neighborly concerns beyond one's tribe, race, class and nation" as opposed to "racism, extreme militarism, and materialism." Bolivia's President Evo Morales describes this shift in values as "living well," not just living better.

Our last step, was deciding to use "Guardianship of

Future Generations” and “the Precautionary Principle” as complementary over-arching policy strategies that underscore our relationship to the earth and the moral imperative that we take responsibility for our actions and their impact on people and the ecosystems on which all life depends.

Briefly, **Future Generation Guardianship** is based on the understanding that people who live today have the sacred right and obligation to protect the commonwealth of the Earth and the common health of people and all our relations for many generations to come. The **Precautionary Principle** can be summarized that when an activity raises threats of harm to the environment or human health, precautionary measures should be taken, even if some cause and effect relationships are not fully established scientifically.

We are grateful that since 2011 our work has been generously supported by mini-grants, in particular for the “Communities and Nature” study guide, our core education project, now presented by four California branches. We’ve reported on our work in past issues of *Peace and Freedom* and the eNews.

Recently, we’ve been collaborating with other issue groups:


- Joining with Advancing Human Rights to support Detroit members and the African-American community in their 10-year campaign to end water-shut-offs and housing foreclosures, and realize the human right to water with an affordable water policy.
- Creating the new Human Right to Health and Safe Food campaign with Corporations v Democracy (CvD).
- Working with CvD and Disarm/End War to defeat the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) and expose the combined economic and military “pivot to Asia.”

People and the planet are in crisis. We need your passion and energy to create a truly ecological civilization. There are many opportunities for working with Earth Democracy. Please join our coordinating team or one of the committees so we can continue to expand our projects. We want to link members and branches doing similar work so they can share experience, advice and materials. Perhaps we can initiate a blog? We want

to continue to collaborate with other issue committees to broaden our analysis and framing. And, Earth Democracy can help branches apply for mini-grants for special projects. Jean Hays, Fresno (Calif.) Branch, was recently funded for a tour and documentary video of fracking in the Central Valley that will be available to all members.

We welcome you to Earth Democracy. Please let Randa Solick, rsolick@gmail.com, know how you would specifically like to join in our work together or just to subscribe to the general earthdemocracy listserv for information sharing.

Middle East

 **Our Middle East Issue Committee consists of a group of WILPF members who have a passion about advancing peace and justice in the Middle East and focusing on US policies.** There is much to do in the Middle East, but we tried to do a few things meaningfully. This depends on the voluntary work and time our members are able and willing to donate to advance this issue and WILPF US.

So at this time we have focused on three things:

1. Making a guide on Hamas for our members called: “Hamas at the Middle East Peace Table: Why?”
2. Working on advancing A Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone (MEWMDFZ) in the Middle East
3. Supporting the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) aka the “Iran Nuclear Deal”

The Hamas guide can be downloaded from our web site, wilpfus.org/our-work/middle-east or ordered from the WILPF US office. Copies of the guide have been sent to every branch for study, analysis, conversation and actions. The main idea is for our members to learn about the Middle East and to conduct a campaign to get Hamas, the elected representative of the Palestinian people, off the US terrorist list so they can negotiate at the peace table. And, we oppose the Israeli bombing of Gaza and call for the end of the siege of Gaza.

In our summary to the guide we explain:

Our study of Palestine and Hamas indicates violations of democracy, which led to this discussion and the publication of this booklet. In free and fair elections held in 2006, the Palestinian people chose a representative leadership which can speak for

them in peace talks. However, this leadership, in the form of Hamas, as the elected government serving at least Gaza, has not been allowed to be seated at the peace table, nor to participate as the duly elected representatives of the Palestinian people. Consequently, any peace agreement which might be reached in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict might not be representative of the will of the majority. We believe that Hamas, as the elected representative, must have the opportunity to participate in all peace talks. Hamas, specifically excluded from these talks while it governed Gaza, has been similarly shunned since the establishment of the “unity government” that has been overseeing Gaza since the summer of 2014.

In this booklet, we describe the history of the people who elected Hamas in the context of the time and place in which Hamas came into being. We attempt to demystify the organization Hamas as it now exists. We do not deny that Israel and Palestine – or Israel and Hamas – are enemies. But we do recognize that, if one wishes to achieve peace, one must speak with one’s enemies. Speaking only with one’s friends will not achieve the desired result.

We are now calling branches to learn how they want to work with us and what they want to do with the guide. Some study and discuss, some plan to lobby Congress.

Several European countries have removed Hamas from the terrorist list. So we hope the readings and conversations will generate more active participation from our members and some meaningful actions towards this end.

Our second action has been working on advancing the creation of a Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone (MEWMDFZ) in the Middle East with the Disarm Committee. We wrote a statement on this issue now in our archives. We took that statement to Vienna, where the United Nations was holding prepcom meetings on the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). There, they spoke about a Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone and a possible Helsinki conference on the topic, which was later cancelled by the US and Israel. We also went to Haifa, Israel, where the first ever conference in Israel on nuclear weapons and a MEWMDFZ took place.

We also supported the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) aka the “Iran Nuclear Deal.” Our statement of support, along with other action alerts on

issues pertaining to the Middle East, can be found on the WILPF US website, Middle East page.

The Middle East Committee is eager to have new members bring their passions to the committee and to indicate the issues they will want to work on, including, but not limited to the following: the wars in Iraq and Syria, the use of drones that kill many civilians, Gaza, international laws, poverty, refugees, Palestinian prisoners, human rights, and women at the peace table. *US policies impact all of these concerns.* The peace movement in Israel also needs our support.

There is so much to do to end wars and occupations, demonstrate solidarity, create more justice, and more peace. We need all the minds and hands we can get. We welcome new members or branches to work with us. To become part of the Middle East issue committee, please contact one of our co-chairs, Odile Hugonot Haber, odilehh@gmail.com, or Barbara Taft, beejayssite@yahoo.com.

Welcome New Branches! We're very excited to welcome our new and developing branches to WILPF US:

**Houston, Texas,
Worcester, Massachusetts,
Gainesville, Florida**

Forming a branch ensures that we expand our ability to advance our mission: A transformed world at peace, where there is racial, social, and economic justice for all people everywhere. To find out about WILPF events or starting a branch in your area, email [LaShawndra Vernon](mailto:LaShawndra.Vernon@lvernon.esp@gmail.com), lvernon.esp@gmail.com. For more information about getting involved in the national campaigns of WILPF US, email the board program chairs, Odile Hugonot Haber, odilehh@gmail.com, or Maureen Ngozi Eke, eke1mn@cmich.edu.

WILPFer Tomi Allison is *The Accidental Mayor*

By Marybeth Gardam

I've worked with Tomi and Jim Allison of Bloomington, Indiana, through WILPF's Corporations v Democracy Issue Committee for years and have appreciated Tomi's skill at finding

practical solutions that work. But it wasn't until I read her recent book, *The Accidental Mayor*, that I understood her as a consummate "connector" with years of political and community organizing and practical negotiating experience which helps disparate entities find common ground.

As a newcomer to town, Tomi dug into Bloomington, getting to know both the progressive community and folks on the other side of that fence. She won respect first as county campaign director for Eugene McCarthy in 1966, then went on to serve on the city council. When an unexpected vacancy arose, Tomi was urged to run for mayor. Her reputation and generosity of spirit helped her win that election, and several more. Her colorful stories of hard won progress through negotiating with people of different political perspectives provide an important look at how local politics is supposed to work. In *The Accidental Mayor* we learn that not only is Tomi practical, she's effective and funny.

This book's personal and historical perspective offers an insider's look at community politics and the warmth with which Mayor Tomi (sometimes nicknamed "Mom" by city employees) got things done by uniting opposing forces towards progress and achievement.

In 1983, after only nine months on the job, Tomi faced the high drama of a police shooting of an unarmed (but physically threatening) young black man whose steroid use caused a sudden break with reality and pitted him violently against three white police officers. Mayor Tomi coordinated a response that could be a model for cities experiencing the same kinds of attacks now.

Her effort to keep the historic courthouse as an important anchor in downtown Bloomington tells the story of one city that said NO to urban flight and suburban sprawl. Her creative work on parking, parks and the complex issues surrounding Bloomington's designation as a Superfund site (because of Westinghouse's decades long dumping of PCBs) demonstrate that Mayor Allison's "fingerprints



are all over Bloomington today." Her far-thinking policies and strategies to make the city as beautiful, livable and as democratic as possible continue to resonate.

Over the course of Tomi's 13 years as mayor, the face of politics changed. Local groups funded by very wealthy stakeholders began to take over the democratic process. No wonder Tomi and Jim work so hard on WILPF's Corporations v Democracy issues. They've seen up close and personal just what big money can do to small town America.

Anything the Allisons write has proven to be simultaneously accessible, educational and fun. *The Accidental Mayor* is all that and then some.

THE ACCIDENTAL MAYOR, by Tomilea and James Allison, is available from your independent bookstore, powells.com or amazon.com.

Welcome New Board Members



Marybeth Gardam



Maureen Ngozi Eke

WILPF US is happy to welcome two new members to our Board: Marybeth Gardam, at-large, and Maureen Ngozi Eke, chair, program. Marybeth lives in Winter Haven, Florida and also serves WILPF US as the chair of the Corporations v Democracy issue committee and co-chair of the Growing WILPF! campaign. Maureen hails from Mount Pleasant, Michigan, where she is a professor of English at Central Michigan University. She is currently organizing a university conference on Human Trafficking and served as a Local2Global participant for WILPF at the 2015 UN Commission on the Status of Women. Both bring great commitment and talent to WILPF!

From The Hague

The Centennial year for WILPF has been celebrated and recognized as a time to learn from our history and work for our future

The Triennial Congress and the following WILPF Conference, “Women’s Power to Stop War,” are now part of our history, giving us inspiration for moving forward. For those who were unable to attend the events at The Hague, go to wilpf.org where you can find the following:



1. WILPF Manifesto adopted by Congress (download available in French, Spanish and English)
2. Summary of the Conference
3. Recordings of 42 of the sessions held during the Conference

In addition, we present some first-hand impressions on these pages. *Peace & Freedom* is grateful to progressive journalist, Amy Goodman, for giving us permission to reprint her article from her Democracy Now! coverage of the Conference. We thank members Laura Dewey, WILPF Detroit, and Robin Lloyd, WILPF Burlington, for sharing their experiences.

Photo highlights of the events at The Hague can be found on the inside back cover.

A Century of Women Working for Peace

By Amy Goodman

THE HAGUE, Netherlands—One hundred years ago, more than 1,000 women gathered here in The Hague during World War I, demanding peace. Britain denied passports to more than 120 women, forbidding them from making the trip to suppress their peaceful dissent. Now, a century later, in these very violent times, nearly 1,000 women have gathered here again, this time from Africa, Asia and Latin America, as well as Europe and North America, saying “No” to wars from Iraq to Afghanistan to Yemen to Syria, not to mention the wars in our streets at home. They were marking the 100th anniversary of the founding of WILPF, the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom. Dr. Aletta Jacobs, a Dutch suffragist who co-founded the group a century ago, said the purpose of the original gathering in 1915 was to empower women “to protest against war and to suggest steps which may lead to warfare being an impossibility.”

Among the women here were four Nobel Peace Prize winners. Shirin Ebadi was awarded the prize in 2003 for advocating for human rights for Iranian women, children and political prisoners. She was the first Muslim woman, and the first Iranian, to receive a Nobel. Nevertheless, she has lived in exile since 2009, and has only seen her husband once since then. “Had books been thrown at people, at the Taliban, instead of bombs, and had schools been built in Afghanistan,” Ebadi said in her keynote address to the WILPF conference this week, “3,000 schools could have been built in memory of the 3,000 people who died on 9/11—at this time, we wouldn’t have had ISIS. Let’s not forget that the roots of the ISIS rest in the Taliban.” She was joined by her sister laureates Leymah Gbowee, who helped achieve a negotiated peace during the civil wars in Liberia; Mairead Maguire, who won the peace prize in 1976 at the age of 32 for advancing an end to the conflict in her native Northern Ireland; and Jody Williams, a Vermonter who led the global campaign to ban



Amy Goodman speaking at Women's Power to Stop War conference.

Photo: Li Grebäck, WILPF

land mines, and who now is organizing to ban “killer robots,” weapons that kill automatically, without the active participation of a human controller.

These four world-renowned Nobel laureates were joined by nearly a thousand deeply committed peace activists from around the globe. Madeleine Rees, the secretary-general of WILPF, recalled the history of the first gathering in 1915, and how it was organized: “It wouldn’t have happened, but for the suffrage movement,” she told me, “because you don’t just start a mass movement. You actually have to have an organizational structure to make that happen. That had started with the suffragette movement. ... Every single one of those women who went to The Hague ... were demanding the right to vote. They saw, quite rightly, that the absence of women in making decisions in government meant a greater likelihood of war.”

Kozue Akibayashi is WILPF’s new president. After World War II, the US required that Japan’s Constitution explicitly forbid it from pursuing war to settle disputes with foreign states. “The majority of people in Japan support the peace constitution,” Akibayashi explained. President Barack Obama, however, like George W. Bush before him, is pressuring Japan to eliminate the pacifistic Article Nine from the Japanese Constitution. He hosted Japan’s prime minister, Shinzo Abe, in Washington, celebrating Abe as he works to restore Japan’s military to its former offensive capacity. Akibayashi and thousands of others also are protesting the planned expansion of the US military presence on Okinawa.

Africa activist Hakima Abbas was also in The Hague. I interviewed her hours after mass graves were reported in Nigeria, containing victims of the militant group Boko Haram. The story of Boko Haram, she told me, “is an intersection with violent Islamist fundamentalisms, with global capitalism and with militarization ... fundamentalisms, though, don’t start and end with Islamic fundamen-



Nobel Peace Prize laureates (l to r) Mairead Maguire, Leymah Gbowee, Shirin Ebadi and Jody Williams

talisms in Africa. We’ve seen Christian fundamentalisms in Uganda, and the persecution of LGBTQI people.” She then made a connection to the street protests in Baltimore: “In your own country,” she told me, “the white supremacist and Christian right fundamentalisms are exacerbated by the gun culture and the promotion of an armed police force, which is killing black women, men, trans people and children. ... So fundamentalisms is really something that we have to address globally.”

I asked Shirin Ebadi if she had advice for the people of the world. She replied with a simple yet powerful prescription for peace, laying out the work for WILPF as it enters its second century: “Treat the people of Afghanistan the same as you treat your own people. Look at Iraqi children the same as you look at your own children. Then you will see that the solution is there.”

Amy Goodman is the host of “Democracy Now!,” a daily international TV/radio news hour airing on more than 1,200 stations in North America.

Laura Dewey Reports

With the full support of WILPF Detroit, I was able to attend the WILPF Triennial Congress and the 100th Anniversary Conference, “Women’s Power to Stop War,” at The Hague in April. Both meetings were inspiring and exciting, strengthening our organization and the peace and justice movement.

WILPF Triennial Congress

The WILPF International Congress occurs every three years. Over 300 women attended, and all sections were represented, perhaps the first time all the sections were represented at an international congress. Two new sections were formally approved by the delegates: Ghana and Cameroon. A former section, Israel, returned to WILPF, and two groups, not ready for section status, were approved: Nicaragua and Uganda.

One of the most important accomplishments was approval of the new Manifesto, which sets WILPF on its path for another hundred years. I encourage WILPF members to study and discuss it. While the document is not perfect, it could serve as a recruiting tool for prospective members who want to know what WILPF is about.

We also voted for a new Executive Committee (ExCom), including our president, Kozue Akibayashi, who is from Japan. Sameena Nazir, who spoke in Detroit a few years ago, is also part of the new ExCom as an international vice president. We hope that the ExCom reflects more of the diversity of WILPF.

With 300 participants holding various viewpoints, there was bound to be controversy in the discussions. If there had been none, I’d be worried about democracy in WILPF. Issues involved the initial lack of diversity in the proposed ExCom (improved), whether we should amend the Constitution at this time (we did not), whether the notion of patriarchy is still relevant, among others. One weakness in the congress was the lack of time for in-depth discussions on strategies and tactics for peace work. The congress was shorter than previous ones, and perhaps this was a contributing factor. But in true WILPF fashion, we also had fun, courtesy of the Dutch Section,

who arranged a flash mob—with live music and dancing—outside the Peace Palace honoring our forebears, and a gospel concert at the Gandhi Centre.



Laura Dewey presenting her report on The Hague to WILPF Detroit.
Photo: Bill Meyer

Women's Power to Stop War

After three full days with the Congress, the 100th Anniversary Conference began. “Women’s Power to Stop War” was the theme of the conference, which was held at the World Forum. Over 900 women attended, from 80 countries, including from several war zones such as Yemen, Cameroon, Pakistan, and Somalia. This conference was open to all. The Grand Opening was broadcast live on *Democracy Now!* with Amy Goodman.

WILPF, along with other NGOs and peace and justice organizations, ran a multitude of workshops. There were 47 breakout sessions in addition to the plenaries. I attended as many as time would allow and wished I could have attended more of them. One of the important themes was the root causes of war: patriarchy, capitalism, racism, inequality.

Learning from Our Non-Western Sisters

I was impressed by the high level of thinking that came out in the sessions and plenaries, by the passion and the commitment to change. I was especially struck by the women from developing nations, as they seemed to me to have a different, perhaps more politically progressive, mind-set than us. They directly face the most egregious effects of the actions of multinational corporations and the World Bank, of neoliberalism, and of the Western governments. While many of us accommodate ourselves to the economic system we call capitalism, they confront it head-on. They understand the economic system and how it affects them. They “get it.”

In a workshop on transnational companies and women’s human rights, the Mayan activist Sandra Xinico Batz spoke of the impacts of companies’ extractive policies in Guatemala. She cited four types of companies that

are destroying the lands of indigenous peoples: mining, hydropower, agriculture (mono-cropping), and the service industry. The expansion of these transnationals, backed by the World Bank, occurred after the Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) passed in 2005. The Mayans have called for a ban on mining. Canadian mining companies in particular, are taking over indigenous land. Women leaders protesting human rights violations, like Barbara Diaz Sunin, are being harassed and jailed, as are journalists who expose these violations, like Francisca Gomez Grijalva and Norma Sansir.

Feelings of Hope and Unity

Meeting people from all over the world was the highlight for me. I struck up conversations and asked women what their sections were doing, what their struggles were. They were eager to share, and I was eager to listen. We have a lot to learn from each other. I learned, for example, that when women do not hold positions of authority, there are practical consequences. Sameena Nazir of Pakistan WILPF warned us that space for women in civil society is shrinking. In Pakistan, there are far fewer hospital beds for women than for men, for the simple reason that there are few women on the local health boards that make these decisions.

I left the conference with a feeling of hope, despite the terrible problems in our world. The reason for my optimism lies in the people I met, in their resilience, especially the women from developing nations. The hope for WILPF's future lies in part in the diversity of its membership. Our differences actually give us strength. The overall mood was hopeful, joyous, embracing. A feeling of unity. Let's take that unity and move forward.

Laura Dewey, coordinator of WILPF Detroit, reported back to her community on her impressions and insights from attending WILPF's centennial events at The Hague. Her full report can be viewed on You Tube, <http://bit.ly/1K4pVAr>.

Robin Lloyd Reflects

The Women's Power to Stop War: Uniting a Global Movement Conference was an intense and uplifting but sobering event. Women are suffering in increasing numbers as war, climate change and migration make us more vulnerable. We were inspired by the courage of those struggling in dire circumstances for justice and human rights, and for simple survival.

As we met for three days, new crises poured in upon us. A WILPF member from Nepal stood up and told us that her house had been destroyed in the earthquake and she did not know whether her family had survived. Later, at a plenary session, Amal Basha from Yemen delivered an impassioned plea for the end of violence in her country. "Sisters, help me!" she cried. The WILPF executive committee responded with a letter that was taken to 10 embassies in The Hague the next day, saying, in part, "The world is failing Yemen. The world cannot be complicit. Yemen has been betrayed by the international community....Violence and war have been unleashed and fuelled from the outside. The human cost is incalculable." The letter outlined seven demands.

The three day conference was structured with a plenary session at the start of each day with the following:

1. The Movement Starts Now: Engaging Men and Boys for Gender Justice;
2. Root Causes: Power, War and Weapons; and
3. Actions and Strategies for Change.

Amy Goodman led off the first plenary session, and devoted two of her *Democracy Now!* newscasts to interviews with conference participants. She said "We need a media that will cover these most violent times. What a responsibility! We will be sitting around this table for the next three days, not just sitting, but sitting like Rosa Parks did. Sitting as part of action."

An important thrust of the conference was outreach and collaboration with men. The idea that men suffer from patriarchy as do women, was brought out in the Day One session, "Engaging men and boys for gender equality, peace and social justice." Men from Burundi, South Africa and Nicaragua revealed their struggles to escape the heavy burden of violent masculinity. Dean Peacock



Robin Lloyd with the bust of her grandmother, Lola Maverick Lloyd. Robin “talks with” her grandmother, a WILPF founder, in a performance dialogue presented at the congress. Photo: Amy Goodman

of the Global Men Engage Alliance of South Africa stated it clearly: “Masculinities and patriarchy as they are constructed today are toxic to women, the planet and to the vast majority of men.”

Cynthia Cockburn received special acclaim at the Congress that preceded the Conference for her work on the 18 page WILPF Manifesto 2015, the official document of WILPF’s intentions, views and work. “We are face to face with a hard truth. International mechanisms we’ve trusted, and indeed put a lot of our own effort into creating, are proving unable to end injustice and stop war. So we remember the ones in WILPF who never gave up on the word ‘revolution’,” explained Cockburn. “We see that only radically transformative movements, inspired by feminist principles and led by the most excluded of women, are likely to bring equality, justice, love and non-violence,” she concluded.

Cynthia Enloe, an expert on demilitarization, speaking on the Root Causes panel, noted, “Militarism appeals to women in their most conventional mode, to be protected by brother, father, policeman. To be protected is engrained in patriarchal societies.” She advocated that we need to unlearn this mode and ask, “What is protection?” She suggested we need to look at our own intimate lives.

It was thrilling to hear the voices of women from the Middle East, voices that are totally missing from mainstream reporting here in the US. Zahra Langhi is a Libyan activist and founder of the Libyan Women’s Platform for Peace. She asserts that the international community’s “blueprint” for Libya, imposed in 2011, was a complete failure. Nevertheless, mainstream pundits still claim that the NATO invasion of Libya was a success and that the UN fulfilled their obligation to support the civilian population in Libya in line with the principle of “Responsibility to Protect.” Zahra said that the international community was only interested in overthrowing the government, not

creating democracy. “It’s a travesty to think of having democracy without arms control. We’re calling for demilitarization and an end of impunity.”

Twenty women from the DRC Congo attended the Conference. Marie-Claire Furay, a lawyer and Congolese woman living in England, led a meeting on Human Rights in Africa. “Our governments write agreements with international organizations on our behalf without consulting us,” she said. “We wrote a 16 page declaration asking for Africa to be free, and for the European countries to stop supporting dictators. We want a stop to the creation of new legal frameworks; we want the current ones to be implemented.”

Furay was joined by Marie-Lyse Numuhoza from the neighboring nation of Rwanda. She pointed out that “Four countries in the Great Lakes region have come to power with the gun. The UN has facilitated access to power through guns. Outside governments should put pressure on them. We need reconciliation. The Congo is a puppet of the UN. There needs to be inter-Rwandan dialogue. Truth and reconciliation is needed.” Referring to the corporate pirates that are stealing the minerals of the area, she said, “We need to hold to account the multi-nationals who are re-enslaving the population.”

Finally, Edith Ballantyne, the 93 year old former WILPF president and secretary-general brought age and urgency to the discussion. “After 100 years things are worse than ever. We don’t have that much time. I miss the mass demonstrations. People are suffering. When I was a refugee, I was helped; now, no! We have to be out in the street and screaming out, together!”

Women left the conference rejuvenated, planning to return to their communities to laugh, scream and work like hell to make change so that people can survive, with dignity.

Robin Lloyd is a member of the Burlington, Vermont Branch and co-chairs the Growing WILPF! campaign.

The Time Is Now

By Betty Burkes

In 1964, the organizer Ella Baker said: “Until the killing of black men, black mothers’ sons, becomes as important to the rest of the country as the killing of a white mother’s sons, we who believe in freedom cannot rest.” Betty Burkes says that time is now.

How do we find words to tell the story that unfolded in the city of Charleston, South Carolina, on June 17, 2015? And how do we tell the “right” story, the story that might provide insight and inspire right action, action that is beneficial and restorative for all who suffer this tragedy, a tragedy that began so long ago?

The scene of the 2015 tragedy unfolds in the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church, co-founded by Denmark Vesey, a free black tradesman in Charleston around 1816. From the beginning, it was a citadel of hope, a place of refuge away from the eye of the slave owner and white overseer. Here, people of color learned to think creatively as new demands and new dangers emerged. From the beginning it was a holy place. Never just a building, Emanuel was the heart and soul of people seeking sanctuary from the incredible world of cruelty they inhabited.

Slaves and free black Charlestonians gathered there for protection, crafting ingenious strategies for surviving torture and terror, making friendships and building community, feeding grief and loss, assembling altars for honoring the presence of their ancestors. They communed, worshipped and prayed about freedom and justice, choosing life over annihilation, daring to imagine a different world.

Through the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries, until now, Emanuel AME Church survived the hindrances of man and nature: burnings, earthquakes, arrests, lynchings, terrorists and municipal closures. They comforted and harbored one another during the terrorism of reconstruction and reemerged to be leaders in the civil rights movement. The parishioners today have not moved from their co-founders’ vision of justice and freedom.

The church opens its doors even wider to fearlessly welcome the next generation of survivors afflicted by racism and the deafening silence of this nation’s racial history and legacy of slavery. We’ve never really talked about the consequences of these conditions.

But still they rise! Baptized in the traditions of this holy

place, guided by the ancestral forces alive within them, the families of the nine murdered relatives respond with an offering of forgiveness.

Affirming their abiding presence among us, honoring the praise and grief of this tragic moment, we call their names with words the Africans who founded the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church may have uttered, “Ase” or “Ashay,” (“so it is”).

Cynthia Marie Graham Hurd, “Ashay”

Susie Jackson, “Ashay”

Ethel Lee Lance, “Ashay”

Depayne Middleton-Doctor, “Ashay”

Clementa C. Pinckney, “Ashay”

Tywanza Sanders, “Ashay”

Daniel Simmons, “Ashay”

Sharonda Coleman-Singleton, “Ashay”

Myra Thompson, “Ashay”

May their deaths break open the places of fear and ignorance that incarcerate the hearts and minds of this nation. May their offering of forgiveness be an inspiration for the truthful telling of the story that unfolded in Charleston on June 17.

The eulogies broadcast from Charleston not only honored the dead, but named the conditions of these contemporary times that seeded the story of violence in Charleston.

This is a story of a white man, Dylann Roof, not a monster, exercising privilege and entitlement, who enters an historic black church during an evening prayer service and slaughters nine worshipers. This story cannot be understood outside the context of our racial history of violence and terror, north and south, towards black people. It cannot be understood outside the context of whiteness as a system to sustain racial difference and white supremacy.

Whiteness was explicitly crafted to sustain slavery. The concept maintains the ideology of white superiority and black inferiority. Like an invisible virus, it permeates

every layer of our social, economic and political institutions. It poisons relationships before they can begin and diminishes our capacity for authentic human connection to ourselves and one another.

The New Jim Crow

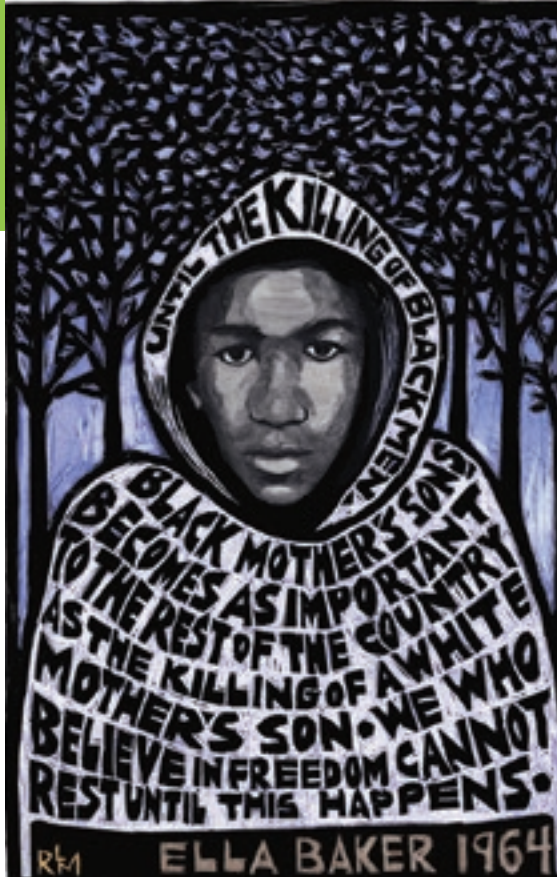
It is ironic that the ideology which shaped Dylann Roof's story in 2015 is the same that inspired Denmark Vesey's vision for Emanuel AME in 1815. Denmark's mission was in defiance and resistance to the lies of racial difference and white supremacy which ended with him being lynched. Dylann's mission was inspired and supported by the same lies which ended in his murdering nine black people.

Racial inferiority and white superiority are an essential part of the southern culture that he was taught to be proud of and to defend. His glorification of the confederate flag is symbolic of his ambitious aspiration, a second chance for the Confederates to spark and then win the war, a race war, this time.

Some wanted to see Dylann Roof's racial violence as an aberration, an act of a mentally ill individual, which is the story we usually assign when the terrorist is white. Many knew and more came to understand Dylann's violence as a reflection of a larger collective illness of racism and dehumanization. It is the same illness which emerges in police officers torturing and murdering black men and women. It's the source of the school to prison pipeline and mass incarceration, the New Jim Crow of our time to disenfranchise people of color. It is the bigotry that has resegregated our schools and relegated children of color to the lower tiers.

Very few people in this country have any awareness of the whiteness ideology that shaped Dylann Roof's tragic life, *and our lives, black and white*, because we have been unwilling to talk honestly about our racial history, unwilling to acknowledge what slavery did to this country. We tolerate so much ignorance and bigotry in our thinking and relationships. There is a deep discomfort raising and naming racism and white supremacy. Because we don't really know what these things are, and even if we do, we don't know how to talk about them in ways that are truly beneficial.

I believe the time for creating a different story, telling a different narrative about our history is now. BLACK LIVES MATTER. There is a thirst, a hunger arising among



BLACK LIVES MATTER reprinted with permission of the artist, Ricardo Levins Morales, rlmartstudio.com.

people for truth telling, for the story that provides insight and inspiration for right action, action that opens the way for grief, forgiveness and the repair of broken promises.

Finally, I appreciated President Obama's eulogy for the nine murdered in Charleston and the vulnerability he embraced. After the shouting and singing subsided, I also wished he had had the presence of mind and heart to call for the appointment of a National Commission on Race and Whiteness. The commission would institute a series of locally facilitated dialogue circles in every city, town and village for the purpose of studying and investigating the history and legacy of race and whiteness in this country. Besides study and investigation, I imagine each circle would be empowered to recommend to the commission a plan for repairing, healing and forgiving the past. For me, this gesture of activism by the president would have been the amazing grace so badly needed to create the America that is yet to be.

Perhaps in WILPF, we can be the change we want and begin holding such circles. Now is the time.

Betty Burkes is a former president of WILPF US and currently president of the Cambridge Insight Meditation Center in Cambridge, Mass.

Stitching Korea Back Together

By Gwyn Kirk

Women Cross the DMZ, May 19-25, 2015

“Our goal was to focus international attention on these issues, to call for renewed dialogue and engagement, and to hold up women’s leadership for peace and disarmament.”

I was thrilled to be part of an international women’s delegation to visit North Korea (officially the People’s Democratic Republic of Korea-DPRK) and cross the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) separating North and South Korea in May—something that Korean citizens cannot do, and that many people said was impossible. We were 30 women from 15 nations, following the example of WILPF women over many decades, the Women’s International Democratic Federation (which sent a women’s delegation to investigate war crimes during the Korean War), and more recent brave efforts of South Korean and North Korean women to connect despite their differences and the highly polarized political situation.

We were stepping into a minefield in many ways. Three points help to explain the context:

1. Korea was under Japanese imperial rule from 1910 till 1945. Japan’s defeat at the end of World War II was a moment of liberation for Koreans, but immediately the Cold War powers—the US and then Soviet Union—divided the peninsula at the 38th parallel. 2015 is the 70th anniversary of this division, which led to the creation of two states, and the Korean War (1950 to 1953)—a dreadful slaughter where about 4 million people died, mostly Korean civilians.
2. The war ended with an Armistice Agreement but no peace treaty—with the continuing fear that fighting could resume at any time. This agreement created the DMZ as the new border and urged the governments to get together within three months to negotiate a peace treaty. Over 60 years later this has never happened.
3. Instead there’s been heavy militarization on both sides, including North Korea’s nuclear weapons program. Each side demonizes the other, with family members separated by the DMZ for decades. Both North and South Korea deploy substantial armies, maintain military bases, and conduct ongoing maneuvers, though the US-South Korea alliance seriously outguns the DPRK.

Our goal was to focus international attention on these issues, to call for renewed dialogue and engagement, and to hold up women’s leadership for peace and disarmament.

The delegation included Leymah Gbowee and Mairead Maguire, Nobel Peace Laureates from Liberia and Northern Ireland, US feminist writer and activist Gloria Steinem, and WILPF’s newly elected International President Kozue Akibayashi. Other participants were scholars, organizers, humanitarian workers, faith leaders, and a social media whiz who sent live bulletins from North Korea via Periscope.

Jogakbo (patchwork), a traditional Korean women’s art form

The delegation met in Beijing, picked up our visas for DPRK and flew to Pyongyang. We stayed at the Yanggakdo International Hotel, with other foreigners. We ate well—and wondered about hunger and how prevalent it is. Through the windows of our tour buses we glimpsed snatches of daily life: buses carrying workers through the streets of Pyongyang; uniformed students going home at the end of the school day; people hanging out by the train station; farm workers planting rice by hand, their bicycles lined up neatly on the edge of the fields. We saw political billboards but no ads. Women who’d been to Pyongyang before noticed more cars on the road now and a lot of new building.

Our hosts were the Korean Committee for Solidarity with World Peoples, and the Democratic Women’s Union. They planned two hectic days of site visits, and organized short marches in two cities—Pyongyang and Kaesong—together with North Korean women marchers, and thousands of well-wishers to cheer us on. In addition they organized what, for me, was the heart of our visit: a peace symposium where women talked about their terrible experiences of the Korean War. A senior army officer had worked in a field hospital back then. She described doing surgery during air raids, shocked to realize that US bombers were attacking buildings identified as hospitals, in total breach of the Geneva Convention. Another speaker reported that the US dropped 400,000 bombs on Pyongyang alone, a city of 428,000 people at the time—almost one bomb for everyone living there. Her family home was reduced to ashes in what she described as a “sea of blood and flames.” Scholars spoke about

the threat of military exercises conducted by US and South Korean forces each year, as well as the effects of economic sanctions—first imposed by the United States in 1950—especially on ordinary people. Their war memories were still so vivid, and they made clear that women and children would suffer most in the event of another war.

We ended this intense morning session with a moving ceremony involving jogakbo (patchwork), a traditional Korean women's art form. There were four sections: one sewn by North Korean women, another by South Korean women, a third by women from the Korean diaspora, and a fourth by the international group. We sewed the pieces together to symbolize our responsibility and commitment to stitch Korea back together. The North Korean women started to sing "Our Hope for Reunification," a song well known in the North and South. Our delegation had been practicing it, so we sang too and shared tears and hugs that went beyond words. In the afternoon members of the international delegation talked about women's work for peace and disarmament in their countries: Suzuyo Takazato (Okinawa), Leymah Gbowee (Liberia), Mairead Maguire (Northern Ireland), Patricia Guerrero (Colombia) and Medea Benjamin (USA).

On May 24th, International Women's Day for Peace and Disarmament, we crossed the DMZ at Kaesong, as agreed by both governments. We joined nearly 2,000 South Koreans at Paju who'd marched along the south side of the DMZ, and walked the last kilometer with them to a rally in a park. Then to Seoul, for a reception with the South Korean organizers, an ad hoc committee that included local groups such as the Gyeonggi Women's Network, Korea Women's Political Solidarity, and Iftopia as well as several national organizations: Women Making Peace, YWCA of Korea, Korea Women's Association United, and the Korean Council for the Women Drafted



Members of the international delegation from right to left: Vana Kim, Mairead Maguire, Una Kim, Hyun Kyun Chung, Gwyn Kirk, with North Korean delegates to the Women's Peace Symposium in Pyongyang, May 21, 2015. Photo: Women Cross DMZ

for Military Sexual Slavery by Japan. The final event was a peace symposium at Seoul City Hall the following day, where Mayor Park Won Soon welcomed us—in contrast to the 30-or-so detractors protesting outside.

At this symposium we learned more about the history of the reunification movement, and the important role that international women can play to help break the current dangerous impasse. We were urged by people on both sides to continue this bridge-building effort, with several offering suggestions for "next time." There's a great deal to absorb from this first step in order to work more effectively in this highly polarized situation where, if you're not on one side it's assumed you must be on the other.

I hope we can move beyond the scripted conversations and gather more allies—in Korea, the United States, and around the world—who can imagine a de-militarized future for Korea and who will help to bring it into being. The exciting recent shifts between the United States and Cuba and the landmark agreement with Iran show that such change is possible.

Gwyn Kirk is a member of the Organizing Committee of Women Cross DMZ, a founder of the International Women's Network Against Militarism, and a life member of WILPF US. For more information on the origins and aspirations of Women Cross DMZ, go to womencrossdmz.org.

Celebrating Jane Addams' Legacy in Her Hometown:

By the JACBA Awards Committee

In late April in Cape Cod, Massachusetts, Ann Carpenter, children's librarian and this year's chair of the Jane Addams Children's Book Award (JACBA) selection committee, live-streamed an announcement of the 2015 winners. A few days later on May 2, in Cedarville, Illinois, the awards were announced in a ceremony which unfolded in a brick school house dating from 1889 — now the Cedarville Area Historical Society Museum — set on a green and sunny hill, the site of Jane Addams' first school and above her childhood home in the village below.

Our gathering in an upstairs schoolroom included students and teachers from the Rockford public Montessori school who, with award selection committee member Beth McGowan and son Dylan and Jim Bade, Cedarville Historical Society host, organized the event. Two other members of the award selection committee, Susan Freiss and Jacqui Kolar, other supporters of books for children about peace and justice, as well as Paul Fry, only living pallbearer of Jane Addams, were in attendance. The program featured the use of nominated titles in schools in Illinois and the announcement of winning and honor books.

Rockford Public Montessori program teachers opened our ceremony by discussing resonances between the approaches and philosophies toward educating children espoused by contemporaries Maria Montessori and Jane Addams. The Rockford teachers also described the program they developed using books nominated for the Jane Addams book awards. Modeled in part on the program Susan Freiss pioneered in her fourth and fifth grade classroom, six Rockford Montessori teachers used nominated titles in classrooms ranging from preschool to eighth grade. Students read or were read nominated books and judged them according to the award criteria. In addition to the in-class work, retired teacher Chriss Muniz ran a special Jane Addams Children's Book Club comprised of older students from many classes who read and kept readers' notebooks on as many of the books as they could. Several students read all titles.

To create such a broad program, the teachers raised money from several sources, including a grant from the

Community Foundation of Northern Illinois, to buy over 300 copies of the nominated titles. These books and earlier JACBA titles have been easily incorporated into the Rockford Montessori curriculum that stresses educating students on social justice issues and activities that address those issues.

Jane Addams books in schools

As the winners and honor titles for 2015 were introduced, we learned of another example of the incorporation of Jane Addams books in schools. Jacqui Kolar, selection committee member and reading specialist and dyslexia consultant at Big Hollow School District 38 in Ingleside, Illinois, introduced our two younger children's honor books using video-taped readers' theaters by third grade students. The first video introduced ***Shooting at the Stars: The Christmas Truce of 1914***. Written and illustrated by John Hendrix and published by Abrams Books for Young Readers, the book tells the story of the Christmas Truce in the trenches of World War I, conveying the futility of war and the powerlessness of individual soldiers who manage against the odds to create a moment of shared humanity amid chaos. Another set of Jacqui's students read aloud ***The Whispering Town***, written by Jennifer Elvgren and illustrated by Fabio Santomauro and published by Kar-Ben Publishing. The readers' theater depicted a young child in a small town in Nazi-occupied Denmark that smuggled Jews out of the country. Perfectly balancing the dread of the situation with the heroism of the townspeople, this book is an excellent introduction to the subject matter for young children.

Introducing the winner of Books for Younger Readers Category was Susan Freiss of Madison, Wisconsin, a veteran teacher who has used the books in her classes for years and has been active with the Jane Addams Children's Book Award for over ten years. The winning book, ***Separate is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez and her family's fight for desegregation***, was written and illustrated by Duncan Tonatiuh and published by Abrams Books for Young Readers. This book tells the story of Sylvia Mendez and her siblings who, upon enrolling in a

Jane Addams Children's Book Awards



Paul Fry, one of the pallbearers at Jane Addams' funeral, joins the JACBA celebrations. On display are some of the award-winning books. Photo: Dylan McGowan Arnold.

new school system, were told they must attend an inferior "school for Mexicans." Sylvia's family worked tirelessly to unite the Latino community and bring an end to the segregation. *Separate Is Never Equal* brings the story to life with illustrations done in a style meant to echo Mayan codex figures.

The first of the older children's honor book, ***Revolution***, by Deborah Wiles, published by Scholastic Press, was introduced by Montessori student Ahna Doherty with her teacher, Rich Muniz. The book incorporates primary source documents and song lyrics from the 1960s with more conventional novel narration to tell the story of Freedom Summer through the eyes of young people whose worlds are turning upside down. Primarily told through the voice of Sunny, a young white girl, depth and perspective are added to the narrative through Raymond, a black boy, and a third-person narrator.

Paul Fry noted that many roads and buildings are named after Jane Addams, but this book award honors Jane more truly.

The second honor title, ***Silver People: Voices from the Panama Canal***, written by Margarita Engle and published by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, was introduced by Montessori student Jordan Rainer. This is a complex book that uses free verse poetry to give a voice to the many lives touched by the creation of the Panama Canal. The voices include the workers from the greater Caribbean, indigenous peoples of Panama, and employees from the US, and more audaciously, the voices of animals, plants, even the jungle itself to convey a story of profound injus-

tice and inequality – and a fight for basic human rights and the rights of nature.

The winner of the older children's book category, ***The Girl from the Tar Paper School: Barbara Rose Johns and the Advent of the Civil Rights Movement*** by Teri Kanefield and published by Abrams Books for Young Readers, was introduced by Susan Freiss and student Charlie Thies. The book tells the true story of a young woman's role in ending segregated schools before the Brown vs. the Board of Education decision. This marvelous title features a little known story of Barbara Rose Johns who urged her peers to resist separate and very unequal schooling with astonishing bravery and little regional or national support. The book is notable for its original research and the wonderfully drawn context of Ms. Johns' activism.

Our final and very special guest speaker was Paul Fry, 92, who with his brothers and his cousin, served, at age twelve, as a pall bearer during Jane Addams' funeral. A WWII veteran, Catholic priest for 15 years, then a social worker in D.C. for the rest of his working career, he returned to Cedarville to be closer to family and to live in an old house built the year before the founding of Hull House, where nearby Jane Addams formed the ideas that have so affected humanity.

Mr. Fry noted that many roads and buildings are named after Jane Addams, but this book award honors Jane more truly. Jane Addams' life and work, he said, were based on "the firmest of convictions in the ideals of democracy and that we are all equal members of one human family. These convictions require that our minds be open to each other."

The ceremony over, everyone enjoyed lunch and cake, supplied by the Jane Addams Peace Association (JAPA).

The JACBA books may be ordered from your independent book seller. This article was compiled by Awards Committee members Beth McGowan and Susan Freiss with much help from Ann Carpenter's descriptions of the honor and winning books. Susan is a member of the Madison Branch of WILPF and Beth is a member of WILPF at large.

Building Bridges: My Trip to Russia

By Jan Corderman

The Center for Citizen Initiatives (CCI) began, as a near-hopeless cause, in 1983. “The United States and the Soviet Union were on a suicidal impasse in the early 80s with 50,000 nuclear weapons pointed at one another. Governments were threatening and counter-threatening,” stated Sharon Tennison, CCI president. Since those early days, Tennison and the CCI have taken about 2,000 Americans to visit the USSR/Russia, and about 7,000 Russians and other nationalities to the US for training in business management and other fields.

This year, armed with Sharon’s book, *The Power of Impossible Ideas*, and business cards identifying WILPF US, I was part of a CCI group of 20 citizen diplomats from 15 American states and one from South Africa. My assignment on this WILPF trip: to bring the message to Russia that American women seek peace, and we organize through WILPF and other groups to advocate for peace in Russia and the Ukraine, as well as other parts of the world.

Our first stop was Moscow, a city of 12 million, center of culture and government. Three of us met with Dmitry Babich, an active journalist focusing on Russian politics. Born in Moscow and graduating from Moscow State University, Babich has had a successful career in Russian journalism for over 25 years. He didn’t mince words: “I’m a centrist that wants to tell you the truth. Russia is better off now than at any time in its history. But the sanctions are a setback.” Sputnik news, where Babich works, was the biggest radio station in Russia at one time and still broadcasts in 32 languages on close to a 24/7 basis.

At the University of Moscow, a group of students and professors framed our visit this way: “War is too important to be left to generals. Peace is too important to be left to governments.” Other student comments included: “Bad relations can change to good relations,” “Talk, Talk is better than War, War;” and “US demonization of Putin is not helpful.” It was also great to hear one of the students say he was pleased to have a visitor from WILPF!

One of the small group meetings I participated in was with two women, an MD and a Health Department employee. While Russians have health care coverage at

no cost, most companies provide additional coverage. There is no “bad” health care, but private coverage offers some extras. Abortion is legal including a new non-invasive procedure for early term abortions. But there is a one week waiting period – even in the case of rape or incest. These two professionals shared their concern that work in medicine and teaching are less respected than other professions.

One wonders how the average Russian reads the comments and actions by our government over the last 15 years. Russians get most of their news from the Internet, and they are particularly aware of our media. Russia was excluded from this year’s G-7 talks for the second year in a row for backing Ukrainian separatists—an allegation it denies. At the talks in Germany this past June, President Obama pushed to maintain sanctions until the peace plan for Ukraine (the Minsk cease fire) is fully implemented.

How are ordinary (and not so ordinary) Russians faring under the US sanctions and the loss of European trading partners? Of course, depending on whom one talks to, one gets different points of view. Privately in our group, and together with those we met, we acknowledged that it’s critical for citizens of our two nations to work together. We need to offset ill stereotypes, to better understand the political realities of today and to build the goodwill bridges.

Jan Corderman is a Leadership Team Member of the WILPF Des Moines (Iowa) Branch. She is available to speak to other branches about her recent trip to Russia. Contact her at jancorderman@msn.com or 515-205-4504.

Board Elections

Elections for the board of WILPF US are coming up! Announcements of openings for the 2016 board will be posted on eNews and in the “President’s Corner.” You can also find information by emailing nominations@wilpfus.org or by calling the WILPF US office at 617-266-0999.

Branch Happenings

WILPF US branches have had a busy year celebrating the Centennial and working hard to continue the fights for peace and freedom another 100 years! Following are some brief highlights from our branches around the country.

Centennial Celebrations

WILPF Santa Cruz members Mathilde Rand, Joy Hinz and Patricia Schroeder shared their observations of the Centennial events at The Hague with the branch and the larger community through a video which aired on Community TV of Santa Cruz County. The video is available on YouTube: youtu.be/PDYIf-bv0il.

The **East Bay and San Francisco branches of WILPF** had a beautiful luncheon at the home of Anne Henny to celebrate WILPF's hundredth anniversary. It was a festive event, with each woman sharing her stories; reading "Women at the Hague" together, a play written by Marghi Dutton; and ending the afternoon with a sing-along of some favorite songs, including "Half the Sky" by the Victoria's Raging Grannies. In the photo of those who attended, the women in the front are holding proclamations from San Francisco and Berkeley, recognizing



From left to right: Barbara Nielsen, Audrey Hanson, Susan Schacher, Carol Norberg, Dolores Taller, Lucy Harmon, Anne Henny, Betty Traynor, Regina Sneed, Judy Nakadegawa, Sandy Thacker and Annie Boddum. Photo: Sandy Thacker

the important work of WILPF by declaring a "Women's International League for Peace and Freedom Day" in both cities. Also shown is the Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition presented to WILPF by the Honorable Barbara Lee (a WILPF life member), which states: "Congratulations on your 100th Anniversary. We recognize your dedication and hard work promoting peace and freedom at home and around the world." The event was a wonderful time to reflect on the important accomplishments of WILPF in adding the voices of so many strong women from around the world working together for peace and justice.

Remembering Hiroshima and Nagasaki

Many branches held remembrances on the 70th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which took place in August, 1945. **The Pittsburgh Branch** worked with the local coalition, Remembering Hiroshima/Imagining Peace, showing the classic film Hiroshima, Mon Amour, on August 5 followed by Skyping with a group of students in Japan. The branch also organized a "Bike Around the Bomb," a 12.5 mile bike ride to raise awareness and trace the blast radius of a small nuclear weapon, and co-sponsored a lecture by John Burroughs J.D., Ph.D., executive director of the New York-based Lawyers Committee on Nuclear Policy.

Monterey WILPF, with the Peace Coalition of Monterey County, Monterey Peace and Justice Center, and the Monterey Peninsula Friends Meeting, held their 11th annual Hiroshima-Nagasaki Remembrance Day at Lovers Point Cove, Pacific Grove. Honoring those who suffered the atomic bombings in 1945, this ceremony reaffirmed a commitment to a nuclear weapons-free world and to alternative, safer forms of energy so that such tragedies are not repeated. The short program was followed by the launching of paper lanterns lit by candles on rafts pulled by kayaks into the cove. For more information, contact Judy Karas, jkaras@sonic.net.

On the opposite coast, **Cape Cod WILPF** held vigils in towns across the Cape on August 6, Hiroshima Day, and a remembrance ceremony at Rock Harbor in Orleans,

Branch Happenings (continued)

Mass., on August 9, Nagasaki Day. WILPF members and allies gathered at the edge of the bay, remembering the tragedies and pledging to work for peace. Paper cranes were distributed to everyone attending, including the scores of tourists who were at the harbor to watch the sunset. For more information, contact Margaret Rice Moir, enjoylifemrm@msn.com.

Cities for CEDAW Campaign

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, is often described as an international bill of rights for women. Consisting of a preamble and 30 articles, it defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination. **WILPF Pittsburgh** is concentrating on making Pittsburgh a CEDAW City, working in conjunction with diverse women's groups, to get the city to adopt and implement CEDAW principles. "Cities for CEDAW" is a campaign to implement a CEDAW ordinance in 100 or more cities at the municipal level by 2016.

The Advancing Human Rights issue committee of WILPF US is working for the ratification of CEDAW, which has not yet been adopted by the US. The CEDAW treaty has been ratified by 187 out of 194 countries. Only seven countries have not yet ratified CEDAW: the United States, Iran, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, and two small Pacific Island nations, Palau and Tonga.

Women Creating Art for Peace and Gender Justice: 20 Years of Collaboration

Minnesota Metro, through its WILPF Arts Committee, celebrated not only 100 years of WILPF, but 93 years of the branch and 20 years of collaboration since the 4th UN World Conference on Women in Beijing. WILPF artists, activists and scholars created a retrospective exhibition which documented their art making with images, photos, videos, posters, story boards, information handouts, books, costumes, quilts, scripts, paintings, posters, puppets and sandwich boards. The exhibit included an ambitious schedule of 12 programs including Minnesota State Senator Sandy Papas who directs Forward Global Women; Cheryl Thomas, director of Global Women's Rights, who was voted by Time Magazine in 2011 as one



Mary Yang with her Hmong story quilt. Photo: Terri Berthiaume Hawthorne

of "150 Women Who Shake the World;" and internationally recognized composer Janika Vandervelde, who has collaborated with the Arts Committee on many previous projects. Arts Committee member Luella Green appeared at the opening as Jane Addams to tell the story of the founding of WILPF.

Organizer Terri Hawthorne describes one of the projects which has developed over many years, the story quilt of Mary Yang:

The WILPF Arts Committee put out a call for stories of women and girls from diverse cultural backgrounds in the metropolitan area who had experienced, but overcome, violations of their human rights for a project called Sharing Stories, Creating Hope. Hmong immigrant Mary Yang was ready to tell her amazing story in public but felt shy. And so began a dialogue between Mary and the Arts Committee that lasted several years. Together we created storyboards of segments of her life – decorating the squares as if they were a Hmong quilt. Mary told her story segment by segment – stories of joy and pain, the hardships and horrors of war, refugee camps and immigration. Of bravery, courage and persistence.

Over the past 20 years, members of the Arts Committee have shared the stories of global women and the United Nations documents on women through the arts in collaboration with other peace and women's organizations. The power of the arts to effect social change and to illuminate public policies is their shared belief. And now there's a video documenting this powerful collaboration. For more information on the exhibit or the video, contact Terri Hawthorne 651-645-4427, TerriHawthorne@comcast.net, or Luella Greene 651-433-3773.

From The Hague

Photos: Li Grebäck, WILPF

What a year for WILPF! In 2015 we celebrated 100 years and held our Triennial Congress, followed by our Conference, Women's Power to Stop War. Here are some photo highlights of the congress and the conference, held in April at The Hague. See pages 11 – 15 for inspiring reports from the events.



Newly elected Executive Committee, l to r: Joy Onyeshoh, Margrethe Tingstad, Sameena Nazir, Kozue Akibayashi, Catia Confortini and Kerry McGovern.



Voting at Congress on the WILPF 2015 Manifesto.



WILPF Secretary General Madeleine Rees addresses members on the first day of Congress.



Members of WILPF Australian Section share the peace quilt with others during the Congress.



Edith Ballantyne, at the Grand Opening of the conference. WILPF's Secretary General for 23 years and International President for another six years, she continues to inspire.



Sylvie Ndongmo, President of the newly accepted Cameroon Section, addresses Congress.



Aliyah Strauss presented the work of the newly recreated Israeli Section to Congress.



Kozue Akibayashi, new International President of WILPF.



Ayo Ayoola-Amale, President of the new Ghana Section.



Please support GROWING WILPF! I do.



I'm asking you, my wonderful and powerful WILPF women (and men), to show your support of my work and the work of so many others by sending in your donation to GROWING WILPF!

We don't have the luxury of time being on our side. ...NOW is the

moment to make a difference!

In 1961 I joined other Portland, Oregon young mothers in response to the Berlin nuclear crisis in a spontaneous local movement to eliminate nuclear weapons and atmospheric testing. That September we were apparently the first to dub ourselves an unorganization and to hit to streets and offices of government with our children beside us. By November we were part of a rapidly growing national movement sparked by courageous and creative Washington D.C. women and powerfully supported by WILPF members Linus and Ava Pauling. We won important victories but realized we were "in it for the long haul" and joined WILPF.

In 1966, however, after being sent by our new branch to both Hiroshima and (as an alternate delegate) to the 50th anniversary conference in The Hague, I followed my husband abroad for thirty-five years. He worked with governments emerging from colonial exploitation and I volunteered—and later worked for local pay—with the poorest people I could find as they struggled for survival and human rights. We were horrified at the roles of the CIA, the US

military and the tactics of some US based corporations.

After my husband was killed in South Africa in 2000 (car accident), I was evacuated to the United States, determined to work nonviolently for US demilitarization on behalf of all the other women, children and men around the world I had come to love so much. For the past 15 years I have found WILPF the best place to grow in the ways of nonviolence and participatory democracy and to work for both disarmament and an end to wars.

Please join me in support of GROWING WILPF! and send your much appreciated donation/pledge today!



in peace, Carol Urner

Thank you for your support!

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